



# FIRE HOUSE

## news

SERVING THE CITIZENS OF BONNEY LAKE, SUMNER, LAKE TAPPS, EDGEWOOD, MILTON, THE RIDGE COMMUNITIES AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

FALL 2013

## HALLOWEEN SAFETY

### Plan for a Scary and Safe Halloween

Everyone loves a good scare on Halloween, but not when it comes to child safety. Here are several easy and effective precautions that parents and kids can take to help reduce the risk of injury.

- When selecting a costume make sure it is the right size to prevent trips and falls.
- Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors.
- Since masks can sometimes obstruct a child's vision, try non-toxic face paint and makeup when ever possible.
- Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be of soft and flexible material.
- Check treats for signs of tampering before children are allowed to eat them. Remind children to eat only treats in their original, unopened wrappers, and candy should be throw away if the wrapper is faded or torn.

See HALLOWEEN, page 4



Postal Customer  
ECR/WS

## Fire Department Celebrates 20th Annual Open House



*Don't miss the fun at the 20th annual East Pierce Fire and Rescue Open House from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, September 28, at the East Pierce headquarters station, at 18421 Veterans Memorial Drive East, in Bonney Lake. Its free!*

**J**oin us for our 20th annual Open House from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, September 28 at the East Pierce headquarters station at 18421 Veterans Memorial Drive East, in Bonney Lake. The free health and safety fair will include booths featuring our partners the Bonney Lake Police, Sumner Police and Pierce County Sheriff's Depart-

ments, plus many more.

The annual Open House showcases programs and services provided by East Pierce Fire & Rescue, including demonstrations by the fire department's special operations teams: Technical Rescue, Wildland, HazMat and Water Rescue.

Parents and children can test

their fire safety knowledge and watch demonstrations of various rescue equipment. Live demonstrations are scheduled throughout the event featuring the use of the "Jaws of Life".

"The highlight every year for most kids is the chance to play firefighter," East Pierce Lieutenant Eric McLeroy says. Younger children suit up in pint-size firefighter gear to put out a "fire" and perform a "rescue." Older children are offered a more challenging course, shooting water from a hose at a target and performing a "rescue".

A medical helicopter from Air-lift Northwest is scheduled to land around 1:30 p.m. Those interested will get an up close look at the helicopter and a chance to chat with the crew.

Ice cream, popcorn and cotton candy will be available from the International Association of Firefighters, Local 3520.

East Pierce firefighters will be selling life jackets, bike helmets and multi-sport helmets at discounted prices. All purchases include a custom fit. Children and adult sizes will be available on a first come, first served basis. Flu shots will be offered for \$25.00.

See OPEN HOUSE, page 2

## Fire District Asks Voters for Seven-Member Board

**T**o better serve the citizens it protects, East Pierce Fire & Rescue is asking residents to vote to adjust the size of the Board of Fire Commissioners from five to seven. "We want to provide an opportunity for everyone in our diverse district to be represented on the board," says East Pierce Fire Commissioner Rick Kuss. East Pierce provides fire protection and emergency medical services for citizens living in Bonney Lake, Lake Tapps, Sumner, Edgewood, Milton, South Prairie, the Ridge communities, Wilkeson and large areas of unincorporated Pierce County.

Commissioners are elected by the public to represent their fire district and serve six-year terms. Although they do not receive a salary, commissioners are minimally reimbursed by the fire district for minor expenses. The board meets monthly to set

budgets, establish policy and provide administrative oversight.

East Pierce fire commissioners serve six-year terms. Any resident, 18 years or older, who lives within the fire district's service area is eligible to apply for an open position on the board.

"We do what a City Council member or school board does, but we focus on fire and emergency issues," Kuss explains.

"If approved, the new board positions will not add any additional cost to the taxpayer, compared to the current eight member board," says East Pierce Fire Chief Jerry E. Thorson.

With the merger of Edgewood, there are now eight fire commissioners on the East Pierce board. By law, the board must be reduced, through attrition, to five. Thorson says that they have learned a valuable



*East Pierce Fire Chief Jerry E. Thorson makes a presentation to the Board of Fire Commissioners.*

lesson having a larger board. "We've found that it's been very effective, allowing for larger break-out committees, better representation and more eyes on the issues," he says.

See SEVEN-MEMBER, page 4



**FIREFIGHTERS LAUNCH  
“OPERATION WARM”**

East Pierce firefighters are teaming up with the Coats for Kids Foundation to launch Operation Warm, an effort to provide new coats to kids in the community who would not otherwise be able to afford them.

The firefighters are working with Daffodil Valley Elementary School to provide coats to 100 students. The firefighters plan to raise \$3,200 to purchase the coats, and then distribute them sometime in October before the cold weather hits.

Coats for Kids Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization established in Alexandria, VA in 2004. It is the distribution partner of Operation Warm, Inc. Last year, several fire departments became involved with the program, and the word spread.

“It looked like a good fit for us,” says East Pierce Firefighter-paramedic Mike Westland, who is also the president of the firefighter’s Local 3520. “We’re always looking for opportunities to get involved.”

This year, the coats will be made in America, something the firefighters strongly support. “It created a couple hundred jobs in the industry, which is a bonus,” Westland says.

The Local is accepting donations from corporate sponsors and individual donors. Anyone interested in making a donation is encouraged to go to <https://donate.operation-warm.org/page/contribute/east-pierce>. Although the firefighters will accept cash donations, they prefer to use the website for collections. “That way we don’t have to worry about bookkeeping and accounting,” Westland says.

He says that if all goes well, Operation Warm will become an annual event.

**HEALTH WATCH: Answering Your Questions**

We get asked a lot of questions about what we do. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions and the answers. If you have a question for us, send it to [chief@eastpiercefirer.org](mailto:chief@eastpiercefirer.org).

**Q: Will I get an ambulance bill if someone in my family is taken to the hospital in an East Pierce fire department Medic unit?**

**A:** Patients who live in the East Pierce Fire & Rescue district and are transported by an East Pierce Medic unit will have no “out-of-pocket” ambulance expenses. Individuals may receive billing information paperwork, which they are required to complete in order to allow the district to bill Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance, if it is available. However any co-pays are “covered” by the district’s EMS Levy. If an East Pierce resident who has no insurance calls 9-1-1, the entire bill is covered. Non-residents receive full bills for ambulance transport. There is never any charge for us to respond to a scene and assess a patient—so “When in Doubt, Check it Out!”

**Q: Why do you charge me for CPR and first aid classes if I live in the district?**

**A:** Until 2012, we did not charge district residents for CPR classes. During the recession, however, the cost of providing more than 30 free citizen CPR training classes per year was unsustainable. The department now charges residents \$15 for a 3.5 hour American Heart Association-sponsored CPR certification course, and the same amount for 3 hour first aid classes. (Both classes can be taken in the same day). The funds received for these adult CPR classes covers much of the cost for instructors. This allows the department to continue to provide free CPR training for more than 1,500 8th and 10th grade students residing in the district.

For residents who just want to know the essentials of adult “hands-only” CPR, we offer free, monthly, one-hour classes in the evening. For further information go to our website: [www.eastpiercefirer.org](http://www.eastpiercefirer.org)

**Q: When there is a car crash on Hwy 410 or 167, how come you end up parking your engines and Medic units so they’re blocking traffic?**

**A:** Working at the scene of highway car crashes places the firefighters at great risk. Every year, firefighters and paramedics, who are working on injured patients at a highway accident, are killed and critically injured by people driving their cars or trucks through the incident scene. Often the people are driving at high speeds, and failed to slow down as they approached the crash scene. Other drivers are drunk, get confused about what’s happening, or are simply impatient to get somewhere.

As a result of on-going firefighter deaths and injuries, our department follows federal and state guidelines to protect these scenes by positioning fire engines and other vehicles to block the scene from incoming cars or trucks. In many cases, this means we will block the lane next to the crash site to provide a safe working zone for our firefighters, law enforcement, and the people we are trying to rescue and treat.

We recognize that our “blocking traffic” can be aggravating when you are in a hurry. For a number of reasons, including patient care, we try to move quickly and safely to get off the scene so traffic interruptions can be minimized. We hope this helps you understand what is taking place at these incidents

**Firefighters Use Empty Bonney Lake Albertson’s Building For Training**

During the months of May and June, East Pierce Fire & Rescue used the old Bonney Lake Albertson’s building, at 20025 State Route 410 East, for firefighter training.

“The interior of the building is perfect for search and rescue drills and firefighter survival training,” says East Pierce Training Battalion Chief Doug Walker. “It’s completely gutted and, when dark, provides the perfect setting for a special obstacle course we created inside.”

This is the type of training that can save firefighters lives by allowing them to learn from their mistakes in a safe environment.

Without a training facility, East Pierce must take advantage of empty buildings when they become available. “We are extremely grateful to Albertsons for allowing us to use the building,” Walker says.



OPEN HOUSE, from page 1

**Other interactive demonstrations and booths include:**

- 9-1-1 Simulator
- Operation Lifesaver’s Train Simulator
- Washington State Fire Marshal’s Residential Fire Sprinkler Demonstration Trailer
- K-9 Unit demonstrations

- Face painting and balloon animals
- Home Depot Kids Workshop
- Hands-only CPR Instruction
- Fire Safety Trailer
- Antique Engine Display
- Pierce County Firefighters Pipes & Drums
- Spot-the-Tot
- Citizen Bucket Brigade

- East Pierce Fire & Rescue Foundation
- Free parking is available at the Pierce Transit Park and Ride at 184th Avenue East, off state Route 410 East. A dedicated shuttle will run to and from the East Pierce headquarters station during the event.

Don’t miss the fun!



# Fire District Launches Addressing Program



Eagle Scout candidate Gavin Vrandenburg displays a prototype of the delineators the firefighters and Troop DXVI will install as part of the new program.

Imagine that someone needs emergency help in the middle of a dark, rainy night. The firefighters are in the area, but because the house address isn't clearly visible, it's difficult to quickly find the right home. It happens more often than you think. That's why the East

Pierce Volunteer Firefighters' Association launched a new House Numbering Assistance Program, in cooperation with a local Eagle Scout candidate.

"The goal of the program is to educate and assist citizens in our community on how to properly display their house numbers for a quicker emergency response," says East Pierce Volunteer Firefighter Sara Arneson, who is spearheading the project.

The Association selected Gavin Vrandenburg, a 16-year-old Orting Boy Scout, from Troop DXVI, to develop the program as his Eagle Scout project. "They gave me the outcome and it was my project to develop the program," he says.

He found an Auburn company, Alpine Products, to create a sign—or delineator—that would be installed by the firefighters and scouts. The signs will be offered to fire district residents for purchase at full price, by donation or free of charge. Alpine Products donated the first 10 signs and a post driver for installing them.

Homes in need of more clear ad-

## Volunteer Corner



dresses will be identified in one of two ways:

- Volunteer firefighters and Boy Scouts will canvass specific neighborhoods looking for homes that have no house numbers and will offer to place a delineator marker; and
- Career and volunteer firefighters will forward information on a home they come across that possibly needs assistance with house numbers.

Vrandenburg and his troop joined the firefighters for the first neighborhood canvassing in August. Additional neighborhoods are scheduled. "We are excited about the program," East Pierce Fire Chief Jerry E. Thorson says. "Not being able to find house numbers slows our response, often when minutes count."

Arneson says that donations from the public will help keep the program going. Those who wish to make a donation can contact the fire department at 253-862-0607.

## FIRE DISTRICT AWARDS

The recipients of the 2012 Recognition Awards were honored at the August fire commissioner's meeting. The awards are based on efforts during the past year.

Battalion Chief Doug Walker was named Officer of the Year. Career Firefighter of the Year went to Kyle Bylin. Firefighter-paramedic Mike Gladstone received the Emergency Medical Services Provider of the Year award.

James Walker was named Volunteer Officer Volunteer Responder of the Year.

Firefighter-paramedic Rex Orcutt received the Mike Roberts Goodwill Award. The award is named for retired East Pierce Lieutenant Mike Roberts. It is presented to the firefighter who has done the most to embody selfless service. Orcutt and his wife Cindy organize the annual Sumer Pancake Feed that raises money to purchase Christmas gifts for local children in need.

Volunteer firefighter Sara Arneson was presented the Ken Thawsh Inspirational Award. The Thawsh Award is given to the person who most exemplifies the East Pierce mission statement – "Exceptional people providing compassionate service and rapid response to our community's diverse needs." Arneson was instrumental in helping to establish the annual East Pierce scholarship program for high school seniors in the area and heads the committee in charge of the program. She also coordinates the district's program with Eagle Scouts.

The Chief's Company included Lieutenant-paramedic Kevin Stabenfeldt, Firefighter-paramedic Vance Mettlen, Firefighter Jeff Collins, Firefighter Bill Sandlian and Volunteer Firefighter Luis Szarko. While all the other awards are voted on by department personnel, the Chief's Company is determined by the command staff.

The annual Fitness Award went to Firefighter Jason Russell.

Nancy Keck received the Administrative Support Staff of the Year Award. Keck, the district and executive secretary, retired in August after nearly 30 years working for the fire service.

Typically the awards are distributed during an annual banquet. However, due to cost-cutting measures, the banquet was not held this year. Instead, the honorees were acknowledged at the commissioners meeting.

# SPOT THE TOT: Before You Turn The Key, Make Sure You Can See



Spot the Tot, an interactive activity, demonstrates how difficult it is to see small children who may be standing or playing around a vehicle.

In the U.S., fifty children are backed over by vehicles every week. Forty-eight are treated in hospital emergency rooms and at least two children are fatally injured, according to KidsAndCars.org. The injured children are predominately between one and two years old. Tragically, a parent or close relative is typically behind the wheel.

In an effort to raise awareness about protecting kids in and around vehicles, Safe Kids World Wide created a program called Spot the Tot which teaches families about preventable injuries that occur in driveways and parking lots when drivers are unaware that children are near vehicles.

East Pierce Fire & Rescue uses the Spot the Tot program in our communities. The interactive activity allows drivers to see first-hand how limited rear-view vision is in larger

vehicles, and how difficult it is to see small children who may be standing or playing directly in front of or behind the vehicle.

Although most backovers involve a larger vehicle (truck, van or SUV), they can happen in any vehicle because all vehicles have a blind zone—the area behind a vehicle you cannot see from the driver's seat.

The fire department urges all drivers to be especially aware before placing a vehicle into reverse, particularly when children are present. "Make it your normal routine to walk completely around a vehicle before moving it," says East Pierce Public Education Specialist Dina Sutherland. "It's also important to establish driveways and parking lots as 'no play zones'."

East Pierce offers the following precautions to help avoid a tragedy:

- Know where your kids are. Make children move away from your vehicle to a place where they are in full view before moving the car and know that another adult is properly supervising children before moving your vehicle.
- Teach children that "parked" vehicles might move. Let them know that they can see the vehicle, but the driver might not be able to see them.
- Consider installing cross view mirrors, audible collision detectors, rear view video camera and/or some type of back up detection device.
- Hold a child's hand when leaving the vehicle.
- Teach your children to never play in, around or behind a vehicle.
- Keep toys and other sports equipment off the driveway.
- Never leave children alone in or around cars—not even for a minute.
- Keep vehicles locked at all times; even in the garage or driveway. Always set the emergency brake.
- Keys and/or remote openers should never be left within reach of children.
- Make sure all child passengers have left the car after it is parked.
- Be especially careful about keeping children safe in and around cars during busy times, scheduled changes and periods of crisis or holidays.

To request the Spot the Tot activity for your next event, call the headquarters station at 253-863-1800.



## Who is East Pierce Fire & Rescue?

East Pierce Fire & Rescue was founded on a strong commitment to customer service. The department’s Mission, Vision and Values guide the actions of the department and its employees. Exceptional customer service and a concern for the employees and their families have become hallmarks of our culture.

EPF&R was created when the City of Bonney Lake Fire Department, Lake Tapps Fire and Pierce County Fire District 24 merged in 2000 with the goal of providing a seamless response to emergency situations.

In 2006, voters in Pierce County Fire District 12 and South Prairie Fire District 20 overwhelmingly passed a special election to merge with East Pierce.

Two years later, the citizens of the City of Sumner and Pierce County Fire District 1 also voted to join the East Pierce family.

On February 9, 2010, Edgewood residents voted in favor of merging with East Pierce.

In 2013, the Milton Citizens voted to annex with East Pierce, bringing expanded fire, rescue and emergency medical services to their city.

Today, East Pierce serves a population of approximately 83,000 residents living in and around Bonney Lake, Sumner, Lake Tapps, the Ridge Communities, South Prairie, Edgewood, Milton and Wilkeson. The district covers approximately 152 square miles and protects residents from 12 stations – six staffed and five volunteer, and one facility on Lake Tapps for the marine rescue unit.

All full-time firefighters are cross-trained as either emergency medical technicians (EMTs) or paramedics and are able to respond to both medical emergencies and fires.

An independently-elected board of citizens governs the agency. ■

## Commisioners

Rick Kuss, Chair  
Edward Egan  
Karlyne McGinnis  
Raymond Bunk  
Kevin Garling  
Ron Scholz  
Mike Cathey  
Dale Mitchell

## Staffed Stations

Station 11	(Headquarters Station) 18421 Veterans Memorial Drive East Bonney Lake, 98391 253.863.1800 www.eastpiercefirer.org
Station 12	12006 - 214th Ave. E., Bonney Lake
Station 13	800 Harrison Street, Sumner
Station 14	3206 W. Tapps Drive E., Bonney Lake
Station 16	10515 - 234th Ave. E., Buckley
Station 18	10105 24th Street East, Edgewood

# Firefighters Raise \$14,000 In Annual Fill-the-Boot Drive

The annual Fill the Boot campaign, sponsored by the firefighters from East Pierce Fire & Rescue, raised \$14,000 for Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Off-duty and volunteer firefighters, support staff and family members braved the summer heat at various intersections in Bonney Lake, Sumner and Edgewood.

The East Pierce International Association of Firefighters Local 3520 coordinates the annual event that assists families affected by

muscular dystrophy in the Sumner, Lake Tapps, Edgewood, Milton, South Prairie and Bonney Lake communities.

“The great thing is that the money we raise stays local to help people in our area affected by Muscular Dystrophy,” said Firefighter Andrew House, who spearheaded the event this year. “Our community has been incredibly generous. We sincerely appreciatæ your support.”

The Muscular Dystrophy Association is a voluntary health

agency founded in 1950 to fight 43 neuromuscular diseases, including ALS or Lou Gehrig’s disease, which affect millions of Americans. The term muscular dystrophy describes a group of diseases characterized by the degeneration of voluntary muscles. The Association’s programs are funded almost entirely by individual, private contributors. MDA seeks no government grants, United Way funding or fees from those it serves.

SEVEN-MEMBER, from page 1

The option to form a larger board was recently adopted by the Washington State legislature. “The legislature recognized that a larger board can provide better oversight,” Thorson says.

Without voter approval of the seven-member board, the current board will be reduced to seven this year, then five when several of the commissioner’s

terms end in 2015.

In November, two current East Pierce board members-Raymond Bunk and Kevin Garling—who are up for re-election, will be on the ballot vying for a single position on the board.

All regular board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month. The general

meetings start at 7 p.m. at the East Pierce headquarters station, 18421 Veterans Memorial Drive in Bonney Lake. Meetings are open to the public and offer residents an opportunity for citizen input.

Agendas and meeting minutes are posted on our website at www.eastpiercefirer.org.

HALLOWEEN, from page 1

Safe Kids World Wide reports that on average, children are more than twice as likely to be hit by a car and killed on Halloween compared to any other day of the year. “Slow down and be especially alert in residential neighborhoods, when driving,” says East Pierce Firefighter Matt Lowery. “Children are excited on Halloween and may move unpredictably, suddenly darting out into traffic or from between parked cars.”

**Make sure your trick-or-treaters follow these safety tips:**

- Children under the age of 12 should trick-or-treat and cross streets with an adult.
- Always cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and

crosswalks.

- Look left, right and left again when crossing and keep looking as you cross.
- Walk—don’t run, across the street.
- Teach children to make eye contact with drivers before crossing in front of them.
- Always walk on sidewalks or paths. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible.

Planning ahead can help make this Halloween a fire-safe one. Check out www.eastpiercefirer.org for more safety tips.

## East Pierce Classes & Public Education

FREE!

TO EAST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE CITIZENS

### LIFE JACKET LOANER PROGRAM

Wearer must be present for fitting | Headquarters Station  
18421 Veterans Memorial Drive East, Bonney Lake

### CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTIONS

Call 253.863.1800 for appointment. Our certified child passenger safety technicians will check to make sure your child is in the right seat, your seat is installed correctly and your child is placed in the seat correctly.

### STATION TOURS

Call to arrange a tour of any of our fire stations.

### SMOKE ALARM INSTALLATIONS

Includes smoke alarm with 10-year batteries. Call 253.863.1800 for appointment

### BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

Stop by any station during regular business hours. (Subject to staff availability)

### FIRE EXTINGUISHER TRAINING

Learn how to use a fire extinguisher in case of a residential or commercial emergency. Call 253.863.1800 to schedule

### HANDS-ONLY CPR CLASS—NEW!

Non-certification class for adult CPR, from 7 p.m. - 8 p.m. (1 hour)  
Dates: October 23, November 26 & December 9

### SERVICES OFFERED

**CPR 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. | BASIC FIRST AID 1:30–4:30 p.m.**  
**Fire Headquarters Station 18421 Veterans Memorial Dr. E., Bonney Lake**  
**October 11, 19 or 26 | November 16 or 22 | December 13**

The cost for citizens residing within the jurisdiction of East Pierce Fire & Rescue, including Sumner, Bonney Lake, Lake Tapps, Wilkeson, South Prairie, Milton and Edgewood, is \$15 for either a CPR or First Aid class, or \$30 for both. The cost for non-residents is \$30 for each class, or \$60 for both.

**To register, call 253-863-1800 during regular business hours or register online at www.eastpiercefirer.org.**

#### HELMET SALES AND FITTING\*

Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Bike helmets sold for \$7 each. Muilt-Sport helmets sold for \$10 each.

#### LIFE JACKET SALES AND FITTING\*

Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Life jackets are sold for \$14 each. Exact change is appreciated.

#### SAFE SITTER CLASSES

Look for 2014 dates coming soon! Registration information is available at www.eastpiercefirer.org. Cost: \$40.

\* Sponsored by East Pierce Professional Firefighters Local 3520